

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1613

As of March 7, 2011

Title: An act relating to providing eyeglasses for medicaid enrollees.

Brief Description: Regarding providing eyeglasses to medicaid enrollees.

Sponsors: Representatives Warnick and Reykdal.

Brief History: Passed House: 2/28/11, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Human Services & Corrections:

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & CORRECTIONS

Staff: Shani Bauer (786-7468)

Background: Current law authorizes the Department of Corrections (DOC) to operate five classes of correctional industry work programs. Those classes of jobs have different rules depending on the industry they are designed to serve to ensure that they have the limited goals of reducing costs to the taxpayer or serving the public in some manner and do not compete with private businesses in the state.

Class II, or tax reduction, industries are state-owned and operated industries designed to reduce the costs for goods and services for public agencies and nonprofit organizations. Industries in this class must be closely patterned after private sector industries, but with the objective of reducing public support costs rather than making a profit. The products and services of this industry, including purchased products and services necessary for a complete product line, may only be sold to public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and to private contractors when the goods purchased will ultimately be used by a public agency or a nonprofit organization. However, to avoid waste or spoilage, by-products and surpluses of timber, agricultural, and animal husbandry enterprises may be sold at private sale or donated to nonprofit organizations when there is no public sector market for such goods.

Inmates working in tax reduction industries do so at their own choice and are paid a gratuity which cannot exceed the wage paid for work of a similar nature in the locality in which the industry is located. Class II includes such jobs as producing aluminum signs, license plates and tabs, mattresses, asbestos abatement, meat processing, optical lab, engraving, pheasant raising, furniture manufacturing, screen printing and embroidery, industrial sewing, and laundry.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The optical lab with correctional industries makes eyeglasses for persons receiving them through the state Medicaid program. With the cost cutting measures throughout state government, eyeglasses will no longer be covered. Enrollees of the program will continue to get their eye exam paid for, but must purchase their own eyeglasses in the open market.

Summary of Bill: Eyeglasses produced through a Class II correctional industry program may be sold to a licensed health professional for the sole purpose of providing those eyeglasses to enrollees of a state medical program so long as the health professional does not charge more than the cost of acquiring the eyeglasses.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.